

WHAT CITY'S LIVELY DAYS.

WITH THEIR BOOTS ON,

Fort Hays—Trivial Causes Leading to Murder—Wild Bill Hickok's Exploits—The Great Killing—City Changed Now.

DODGE CITY, Kan., April 11.—The decision of Congress to give old Fort Hays to the State

of Kansas for use as a branch of the State Agricultural College has started a flood of reminiscences. The first was named in honor of the

Alexander Hays, who lost his life in the battle of the Wilderness in 1864. In 1872 it was the most important post in all this region. Generals Custer, Pope, Forsythe, Lawton, Otis, Wood and Shafter all did military service here. It figured very prominently in the reports of the Indian wars of the early 70s. During the last days of the administration of President Grant and upon the recommendation of Gen. Sherman

The reminiscences referred to relate to the early stormy days of the town of Hays City, which sprang up to the north under the protection of the garrison. The visitor finds little in the pretty, law abiding and moral Hays City of to-day to suggest the excitement, wickedness and wanton waste of human life that made it notorious during the latter 70s and early 80s. In 1875 there were eight murders there in one month,

City started with the building of the first transcontinental railroad across the plains. All the border characters who followed the construction of the railroad soon went to Hays City, where they could make their money and then go home without order there for two years and a half after the town sprang up. All the vicious, depraved people on the frontier who preyed on the mild and law-abiding citizens of the frontier towns of Nebraska and Colorado went to Hays City in the late 1870s and 1880s. When the railroad construction had moved westward Hays City became an exclusively cowboy town. Ninety-five per cent of all the men in Hays City went to work in the railroad industry. The town was walled in with extra boards and galvanized iron to protect themselves from stray bullets. The precaution was necessary. The dancing girls who comprised women from 14 to 30 years of age, the saloons and gambling houses were run rampant and at full blast day and night, week after week.

There were murders by the score in Hays City. Wild Bill Hickok was the first killer in Hays City. He was killed by a man named Tom Horn. The man who killed him had killed two white men in his day. Bill Masterson, who

of a deliverer, and having slain four men, he had the reputation of being a hero. When the summer reached the town and he increased the number by two men in Hays City. Over in a sun-baked cemetery on a side hill, west of Hays City, lie all who died in the town until 1880. There are about 240 graves, and nearly ninety of the graves were filled by tragedies of some sort. If you take the name, Boot Hill, thirty years ago, because so many of its occupants died with their boots on. In one grave a woman and three men, who killed one another in a brawl about winnings at cards, were buried together. The bodies were carried directly from the dance hall where they fell to the grave. Four miles south of Hays City, on the farm of a prosperous Russian, stands a cottonwood tree one of the very few trees in the locality.

Only slight provocation was needed for murder. The Empire Hotel, a frame structure with a few bunks and a room for a saloon and gambling, was the scene of a sample shooting affair. One day in December, 1873, a gambler named Lewis, from Chicago, had a dispute with the bartender, Irish Jim Daly, about how rich was a friend of Lewis'. Lewis, who was a big fellow, ran to the door, and, turning, drew his pistol and fired at Daly. The latter snatched his pistol from behind the bar and returned the fire. This was kept up until both men had emptied their pistols, and then Daly, being mortally wounded, went to the back of the saloon, laid himself out upon the billiard table and died. A little stage was set for the occasion, and a crowd gathered in the fighting. His only weapon was a Texas-made, barrelled, muzzle-loading pistol. Taking this in his hand, he rushed up behind Lewis and

squarely between the shoulders. Then, without waiting to see the result of his shot, he dropped his weapon and fled. Lewis, who happened to be wearing a heavy overcoat, did not even know that he had been hit, and continued his main fight as if nothing had happened. When he was shot, he was about 100 feet away from some men and reported that he had killed Lewis. Then he continued his flight, and from that day to this no human being is known to have seen him alive or dead.

A flagrant case that Lewis was arrested and tried, but at a trial of three days gave him the usual acquittal. "The news of the killing of a man by a woman," said a newspaper, "was the comrade of his from Denver, named 'Daughter,' buckled on his belt of cartridges and with his revolver in his hand, followed her to the hotel where ten days after the shooting at the Empire Hotel he ate a big meal at the best restaurant in the city, and then he went home to his key home." Then he started out to find Lewis. He found him in a keno game going up on the

No story of the exciting days in early June was complete without something about James W. "Boss" McCreary, the man who had been a notorious desperado and man killer and on that score was hired to keep order as the lawless days of the summer of 1906 drew to a close. A month was offered him he put on a silv suit and took two huge loaded revolvers and started out on his rounds. He was a big, powerful, heavy, and his favorite way of using them was by clubbing (grasping the handles, he said) and hitting the head of anyone who was out of the line. He never let up for a moment with his endeavor to keep order. His treatment had been so effective that the lawless and saloon men made many complaints. They were having a life of their own and never walked on the streets without shooting

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one night in the fall of 1871. A Missourian named Martin was killed by an Irishman named John, who was duly tried and acquitted. Martin's friends, who were Irish, were angry and did so, but in the accompanying shooting four other men and one woman were killed and 12 were injured. The Irishman, John, and McCluskey shot nine of his enemies in the novel way he had four six-shooters on him. At the first pop of a gun he deliberately walked toward the crowd, waving his arms and holding his arms between the arms and belly of the dead man, used the body to protect him and then, after the fight he mounted a horse and left town.

Mike Fitzpatrick kept a dive which he called the Side Track, because the unlucky fellow who got caught there found out that his money was gone. Some of the detectives were bold enough to protest against his robbery of the others, a prominent merchant, Ben Rahrhoff, told them that they were

with his vile whiskey and started out to kill the merchant was sought, but happened to be in his store. Fitzpatrick went up the street threatening everybody and walked into a saloon. There he saw the city's Justice of the Peace and without the slightest provocation or warning shot him through the heart. The Marshal, Jack Johnson, had been advised that Fitzpatrick was on a raid, and started to capture him. Seeing him coming out of the saloon, Johnson, armed with a Winchester rifle, on a well curbed and taking careful sight shot him dead.